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ANTONELLI, TERRY, STOUT & KRAUS, LLP  
1300 NORTH SEVENTEENTH STREET  
SUITE 1800  
ARLINGTON, VA 22209-3873

EXAMINER

JEANTY, ROMAIN

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3623

DATE MAILED: 02/14/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary****Application No.**

10/035,149

**Applicant(s)**

SAKIMURA ET AL.

**Examiner**

Romain Jeanty

**Art Unit**

3623

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --****Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 January 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 16-17 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 2-7 and 9-14 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,8 and 15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

### **DETAILED ACTION**

1. This Non-Final Office Action is in response to the filing of this application on January 4, 2002. Claims 1-15 are pending in the application.

### **Preliminary Amendment**

2. The preliminary Amendment filed on May 22, 2002 is acknowledged and recorded

### **Information Disclosure Statement**

3. The information disclosure statement filed January 4, 2004 fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(1), which requires the following: (1) a list of all patents, publications, applications, or other information submitted for consideration by the Office; (2) U.S. patents and U.S. patent application publications listed in a section separately from citations of other documents; (3) the application number of the application in which the information disclosure statement is being submitted on each page of the list; (4) a column that provides a blank space next to each document to be considered, for the examiner's initials; and (5) a heading that clearly indicates that the list is an information disclosure statement. The information disclosure statement has been placed in the application file, but the information referred to therein has not been considered.

### **Claim Objections**

4. Claims 8 and 13 are objected to because of the following informalities: The acronym "DB" needs to be defined. Appropriate correction is required.

### **Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102**

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

6. Claims 1, 8 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Bacon et al “Bacon” (U.S. Patent No. 6,430,538).

As per claim 1, Bacon discloses a workflow management system and method that provides personal subflow processing. In so doing, Bacon discloses a data processing unit, a storage unit containing a staff/organization database, and an input-output unit; wherein the work support information extracting program is provided with a work extracting function that stores an inputted work database into the storage unit and a work support flow generating function that generates work support flow data from the information in the staff/organization database and work database and stores the data into the storage unit as well; and the work support flow generating function is provided with a function that generates, from the workflows in an organizational class stored in the work database and class information stored in the staff/organization database, the work carrying-out condition information applicable to multiple organizational classes (Note the abstract; column 4, lines 15-67 and column 5, lines 23-55).

As per claim 8, Bacon discloses a workflow management system and method that provides personal subflow processing. In so doing, Bacon discloses a data processing unit, a storage unit, and an input-output unit; wherein the work support information extracting program is provided with a staff/organization DB inputting function that stores an inputted staff/organization database into the storage unit, a work extracting function that stores an inputted work database into the storage unit, and a work support flow generating function that generates work support flow data from the information in the staff/organization database and work database and stores the data into the storage unit; and the work support flow generating function is provided with a function that generates, from the workflows in an organizational class stored in the work database and class information stored in the staff/organization database, the work carrying-out condition information applicable to multiple organizational classes (Note the abstract; column 4, lines 15-67 and column 5, lines 23-55).

#### **Allowable Subject Matter**

7. Claims 2-7, 9-14 are allowed.

Prior art of record taken alone or in combination fails to teach or suggest a data processing unit, a storage unit containing a staff/organization database, and an input-output unit; wherein the work support information extracting program is provided with a work extracting function that stores an inputted work database into the storage unit and a work support flow generating function that generates work support flow data from the information in the staff/organization database and work database and stores the data into the storage unit as well; and the work extracting function is provided with a work item name inputting function that

Art Unit: 3623

inputs the work item information corresponding to the organizational class information in the staff/organization database, a work carrying-out unit extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out unit information, a work carrying-out condition extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out condition information, a function that registers a set of the work item information, work carrying-out unit information and work carrying-out condition information, a class workflow completion condition generating function that inputs the condition of completing the whole work in the organizational class, and a function that inputs sub-work items subdivided from the work item if the work carrying-out unit corresponding to the work item information is an organization as recited in independent claim 2.

Prior art of record taken alone or in combination fails to teach or suggest a work support information extracting program which is executed on a computer comprising a data processing unit, a storage unit containing a staff/organization database, and an input-output unit; wherein the work support information extracting program is provided with a work extracting function that stores an inputted work database into the storage unit and a work support flow generating function that generates work support flow data from the information in the staff/organization database and work database and stores the data into the storage unit as well; the work extracting function is provided with a work item name inputting function that inputs the work item information corresponding to the organizational class information in the staff/organization database, a work carrying-out unit extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out unit information, a work carrying-out condition extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out condition information, a function that registers a set of the work item information, work carrying-out unit information and work carrying-out condition information, a class workflow

Art Unit: 3623

completion condition generating function that inputs the condition of completing the whole work in the organizational class, and a function that inputs sub-work items subdivided from the work item if the work carrying-out unit corresponding to the work item information is an organization; and the work carrying-out unit extracting function is provided with a function that presents, as a candidate for carrying out the work item, the name of the manager of the organizational class corresponding to the work item information, names of subordinates under the manager, and names of organizations under the organizational class as recited in claim 3

Prior art of record fails to teach or suggest a data processing unit, a storage unit containing a staff/organization database, and an input-output unit; wherein the work support information extracting program is provided with a work extracting function that stores an inputted work database into the storage unit and a work support flow generating function that generates work support flow data from the information in the staff/organization database and work database and stores the data into the storage unit as well; the work extracting function is provided with a work item name inputting function that inputs the work item information corresponding to the organizational class information in the staff/organization database, a work carrying-out unit extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out unit information, a work carrying-out condition extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out condition information, a function that registers a set of the work item information, work carrying-out unit information and work carrying-out condition information, a class workflow completion condition generating function that inputs the condition of completing the whole work in the organizational class, and a function that inputs sub-work items subdivided from the work item if the work carrying-out unit corresponding to the work item information is an organization; and the work

Art Unit: 3623

carrying-out condition extracting function is provided with a function that inputs a workflow, comprising the carrying-out sequences and conditions of a single or multiple pieces of work in the organizational class, independently in the organizational class as recited in independent claim 4.

Prior art of record fails to teach or suggest a processing unit, a storage unit, and an input-output unit; wherein the computer is equipped with a staff/organization database; the work support information extracting program, being executed on the computer, realizes a work extracting function that stores an inputted work database into the storage unit and a work support flow generating function that generates work support flow data from the information in the staff/organization database and work database and stores the data into the storage unit; the work extracting function is provided with a work item name inputting function that inputs the work item information corresponding to the organizational class information in the staff/organization database, a work carrying-out unit extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out unit information, a work carrying-out condition extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out condition information, a function that registers a set of the work item information, work carrying-out unit information and work carrying-out condition information, a class workflow completion condition generating function that inputs the condition of completing the whole work in the organizational class, and a function that inputs sub-work items subdivided from the work item if the work carrying-out unit corresponding to the work item information is an organization; and the work carrying-out condition extracting function is provided with a function that switches a means for inputting the work carrying-out condition information depending upon whether a workflow comprising the carrying-out sequences and conditions of a single or multiple pieces of



Art Unit: 3623

work in the organizational class contains a branch(es) or not as recited in independent claim 5.

Prior art of record fails to teach or suggest a data processing unit, a storage unit, and an input-output unit; wherein the computer is equipped with a staff/organization database; the work support information extracting program, being executed on the computer, realizes a work extracting function that stores an inputted work database into the storage unit and a work support flow generating function that generates work support flow data from the information in the staff/organization database and work database and stores the data into the storage unit; the staff/organization database contains the organization information about the class structure of the organization that carries out the work and the staff information about the staff who constitutes the organization and carries out the work; the work database contains the work item information, work carrying-out condition information that indicates the sequences and conditions of carrying[claim 6]out the work, and work carrying-out unit information that indicates the person(s) or organization(s) in charge of carrying out the work, and also contains the work carrying-out condition information independent for each organizational class; and the work support flow data contains the work item information, work carrying-out condition information and work carrying-out unit information and also contains the work carrying-out condition information applicable to multiple organizational classes as recited in independent claim 6.

Prior art of record fails to teach or suggest a data processing unit, a storage unit containing a staff/organization database, and an input-output unit; wherein the work support information extracting program is provided with a work extracting function that stores an inputted work database into the storage unit and a work support flow generating function that generates work support flow data from the information in the staff/organization database and

Art Unit: 3623

work database and stores the data into the storage unit; the staff/organization database contains the organization information about the class structure of the organization that carries out the work and the staff information about the staff who constitutes the organization and carries out the work; the work database contains the work item information, work carrying-out condition information that indicates the sequences and conditions of carrying out the work, and work carrying-out unit information that indicates the person(s) or organization(s) in charge of carrying out the work, and also contains the work carrying-out condition information independent for each organizational class; the work support flow data contains the work item information, work carrying-out condition information and work carrying-out unit information and also contains the work carrying-out condition information applicable to multiple organizational classes; the work extracting function is provided with a work item name inputting function that inputs the work item information corresponding to the organizational class information, a work carrying-out unit extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out unit information, a work carrying-out condition extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out condition information, a function that registers a set of the work item information, work carrying-out unit information and work carrying-out condition information, a class workflow completion condition generating function that inputs the condition of completing the whole work in the organizational class, and a function that inputs sub-work items subdivided from the work item if the work carrying-out unit corresponding to the work item information is an organization; the work carrying-out unit extracting function is provided with a function that presents, as a candidate for carrying out the work item, the name of the manager of the organizational class corresponding to the work item information, names of subordinates under the manager, and names of organizations under the

organizational class; the work carrying-out condition extracting function is provided with a function that inputs a workflow, comprising the carrying-out sequences and conditions of a single or multiple pieces of work in the organizational class, independently in the organizational class and a function that switches a means for inputting the work carrying-out condition information depending upon whether the workflow in the organizational class contains a branch(es) or not; and the work support flow generating function is provided with a function that generates, from the workflows in an organizational class stored in the work database and class information stored in the staff/organization database, the work carrying-out condition information applicable to multiple organizational classes as recited in independent claim 7.

Prior art of record taken alone or in combination fails to teach or suggest a data processing unit, a storage unit, and an input-output unit; wherein the work support information extracting program is provided with a staff/organization DB inputting function that stores an inputted staff/organization database into the storage unit, a work extracting function that inputs the work database from the input unit and stores the data into the storage unit, and a work support flow generating function that generates work support flow data from the information in the staff/organization database and work database and stores the data into the storage unit; and the work extracting function is provided with a work item name inputting function that inputs the work item information corresponding to the organizational class information in the staff/organization database, a work carrying-out unit extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out unit information, a work carrying-out condition extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out condition information, a function that registers a set of the work item information, work carrying-out unit information and work carrying-out condition information, a

Art Unit: 3623

class workflow completion condition generating function that inputs the condition of completing the whole work in the organizational class, and a function that inputs sub-work items subdivided from the work item if the work carrying-out unit corresponding to the work item information is an organization as recited in independent claim 9.

Prior art of record taken alone or in combination fails to teach or suggest a data processing unit, a storage unit, and an input-output unit; wherein the work support information extracting program is provided with a staff/organization DB inputting function that stores an inputted staff/organization database into the storage unit, a work extracting function that stores an inputted work database into the storage unit, and a work support flow generating function that generates work support flow data from the information in the staff/organization database and work database and stores the data into the storage unit; the work extracting function is provided with a work item name inputting function that inputs the work item information corresponding to the organizational class information in the staff/organization database, a work carrying-out unit extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out unit information, a work carrying-out condition extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out condition information, a function that registers a set of the work item information, work carrying-out unit information and work carrying-out condition information, a class workflow completion condition generating function that inputs the condition of completing the whole work in the organizational class, and a function that inputs sub-work items subdivided from the work item if the work carrying-out unit corresponding to the work item information is an organization; and the work carrying-out unit extracting function is provided with a function that presents, as a candidate for carrying out the work item, the name of the manager of the organizational class corresponding to the work item

Art Unit: 3623

information, names of subordinates under the manager, and names of organizations under the organizational class as recited in independent claim 10.

Prior art of record taken alone or in combination fails to teach or suggest a data processing unit, a storage unit, and an input-output unit; wherein the work support information extracting program is provided with a staff/organization DB inputting function that stores an inputted staff/organization database into the storage unit, a work extracting function that stores an inputted work database into the storage unit, and a work support flow generating function that generates work support flow data from the information in the staff/organization database and work database and stores the data into the storage unit; the work extracting function is provided with a work item name inputting function that inputs the work item information corresponding to the organizational class information in the staff/organization database, a work carrying-out unit extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out unit information, a work carrying-out condition extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out condition information, a function that registers a set of the work item information, work carrying-out unit information and work carrying-out condition information, a class workflow completion condition generating function that inputs the condition of completing the whole work in the organizational class, and a function that inputs sub-work items subdivided from the work item if the work carrying-out unit corresponding to the work item information is an organization; and the work carrying-out condition extracting function is provided with a function that inputs a workflow, comprising the carrying-out sequences and conditions of a single or multiple pieces of work in the organizational class, independently in the organizational class as recited in independent claim 11.

Prior art of record taken alone or in combination fails to teach or suggest a data

Art Unit: 3623

processing unit, a storage unit, and an input-output unit; wherein the work support information extracting program is provided with a staff/organization DB inputting function that stores an inputted staff/organization database into the storage unit, a work extracting function that stores an inputted work database into the storage unit, and a work support flow generating function that generates work support flow data from the information in the staff/organization database and work database and stores the data into the storage unit; the work extracting function is provided with a work item name inputting function that inputs the work item information corresponding to the organizational class information in the staff/organization database, a work carrying-out unit extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out unit information, a work carrying-out condition extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out condition information, a function that registers a set of the work item information, work carrying-out unit information and work carrying-out condition information, a class workflow completion condition generating function that inputs the condition of completing the whole work in the organizational class, and a function that inputs sub-work items subdivided from the work item if the work carrying-out unit corresponding to the work item information is an organization; and the work carrying-out condition extracting function is provided with a function that switches a means for inputting the work carrying-out condition information depending upon whether a workflow comprising the carrying-out sequences and conditions of a single or multiple pieces of work in the organizational class contains a branch(es) or not as recited in independent claim 12.

Prior art of record taken alone or in combination fails to teach or suggest a data processing unit, a storage unit, and an input-output unit; wherein the work support information

extracting program, being executed on the computer, realizes a staff/organization DB inputting function that stores an inputted staff/organization database into the storage unit, a work extracting function that stores an inputted work database into the storage unit, and a work support flow generating function that generates work support flow data from the information in the staff/organization database and work database and stores the data into the storage unit; the staff/organization database contains the organization information about the class structure of the organization that carries out the work and the staff information about the staff who constitutes the organization and carries out the work; the work database contains the work item information, work carrying-out condition information that indicates the sequences and conditions of carrying out the work, and work carrying-out unit information that indicates the person(s) or organization(s) in charge of carrying out the work, and also contains the work carrying-out condition information independent for each organizational class; and the work support flow data contains the work item information, work carrying-out condition information and work carrying-out unit information and also contains the work carrying-out condition information applicable to multiple organizational classes as recited in independent claim 13.

Prior art of record taken alone or in combination fails to teach or suggest a data processing unit, a storage unit, and an input-output unit; wherein the work support information extracting program is provided with a staff/organization DB inputting function that stores an inputted staff/organization database into the storage unit, a work extracting function that stores an inputted work database into the storage unit, and a work support flow generating function that generates work support flow data from the information in the staff/organization database and work database and stores the data into the storage unit; the staff/organization database contains

Art Unit: 3623

the organization information about the class structure of the organization that carries out the work and the staff information about the staff who constitutes the organization and carries out the work; the work database contains the work item information, work carrying-out condition information that indicates the sequences and conditions of carrying out the work, and work carrying-out unit information that indicates the person(s) or organization(s) in charge of carrying out the work, and also contains the work carrying-out condition information independent for each organizational class; the work support flow data contains the work item information, work carrying-out condition information and work carrying-out unit information and also contains the work carrying-out condition information applicable to multiple organizational classes; the work extracting function is provided with a work item name inputting function that inputs the work item information corresponding to the organizational class information, a work carrying-out unit extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out unit information, a work carrying-out condition extracting function that inputs the work carrying-out condition information, a function that registers a set of the work item information, work carrying-out unit information and work carrying-out condition information, a class workflow completion condition generating function that inputs the condition of completing the whole work in the organizational class, and a function that inputs sub-work items subdivided from the work item if the work carrying-out unit corresponding to the work item information is an organization; the work carrying-out unit extracting function is provided with a function that presents, as a candidate for carrying out the work item, the name of the manager of the organizational class corresponding to the work item information, names of subordinates under the manager, and names of organizations under the organizational class; the work carrying-out condition extracting function is provided with a



Art Unit: 3623

function that inputs a workflow, comprising the carrying-out sequences and conditions of a single or multiple pieces of work in the organizational class, independently in the organizational class and a function that switches a means for inputting the work carrying-out condition information depending upon whether the workflow in the organizational class contains a branch(es) or not; and the work support flow generating function is provided with a function that generates, from the workflows in an organizational class stored in the work database and class information stored in the staff/organization database, the work carrying-out condition information applicable to multiple organizational classes as recited in independent claim 14.

### **Conclusion**

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Tokuda (U.S. Patent No. 5,878, 398) discloses a workflow server for automatically extracting a a next workflow entrance location from an electronic document for management of the next workflow entrance location.

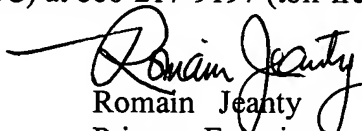
Tokuda (U.S. Patent No. 6,038,541) discloses a workflow server for automatically extracting a a next workflow entrance location from an electronic document for management of the next workflow entrance location.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Romain Jeanty whose telephone number is (571) 272-6732. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thurs 7:30AM - 6:00PM.

Art Unit: 3623

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq R. Hafiz can be reached on (571) 272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

  
Romain Jeanty  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3623  
2-6-06